



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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July 22, 2002

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Paul Baker, Reclamation Biologist 

RE: Site Inspection, Rock-It Stone Works, Strawberry River Quarry, S/013/008, Duchesne County, Utah

Date of Inspection: July 19, 2002
Time of Inspection: 11:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
Conditions: Partly cloudy, 80's, showers near the end of the inspection, evidence of recent rain
Participants: Roger Evans and Shannon Peatross, operator; Paul Baker, DOGM

Purpose of Inspection:

On July 19, 2002, I received two e-mail messages from Chris Lang who lives near this operation. Copies of these messages are attached to this report. Although the messages had no text, the titles were "Strawberry oil slick" and "(rock it stone works)." Included in the messages were six photographs of the area showing brown to black water, and I assumed he thought this water was contaminated with oil. I telephoned Mr. Lang who confirmed this assumption. During the inspection the Division conducted in April, there had been a trackhoe on site, and it was leaking some hydraulic oil. Mr. Lang thought the oil in the water was this oil that leaked from the trackhoe and also from a 55-gallon barrel that had been on site. The purpose of the inspection was to investigate whether there was actually oil in the water and to see what operation practices the operator was using that might contribute to water contamination.

Getting to the site:

Directions to the site are given in the report for the April 4, 2002, inspection.

Observations:

I first went to the quarry, met Mr. Evans, and explained the purpose of the inspection. There was no surface water in the area that was being quarried, but there was what appeared to be a small wetland just to the east of the active quarry area. There were several tire tracks and hoof prints in this area, and there was some water and cow manure on the surface. Most or all of this water was brown to black (Photo 1), but I could see no sheen on the surface. The dark-colored water tends to settle in the

bottom of the depressions. Some of the soil had a black crust. I put my fingers in the water but could not feel anything oily. Neither the soil nor the water smelled like petroleum products. There were lots of mosquitoes in the area, and we found some larvae swimming in the water. Mosquitoes, water skeeters, and dragonflies were all landing on the water surface.

There were two trackhoes on site. One was in the quarry area, and the other was parked on the south side of the road (across from the quarry) (Photo 2). One track was off the trackhoe on the south side of the road, and under the boom of this trackhoe, we found an area of darkened soil that looked like it was contaminated with oil. There was another area of darkened soil in the active quarry area, and it smelled like diesel fuel.

I left the site, met Mr. Lang at his home, and explained to him what I had seen and my conclusions. He gave me a few plastic bags with which I might take samples, and we discussed some of his additional concerns, including the lack of toilet facilities at the quarry. He also said he might take some samples on his own.

After meeting with Mr. Lang, I went back to the quarry to take pictures and to make more notes. Mr. Peatross came, and we talked about the complaint and the other issues discussed in the conclusions and recommendation section below. I also took one sample each of the soil and water.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The purpose of sampling the soil and water was to get an idea whether oil was present and not to make any attempt to quantify the oil. The samples would not have been valid for doing a laboratory analysis.

I brought the samples back to the office and showed them to Tom Munson, Wayne Hedberg, and Ken Wyatt. All of these people have some experience with water samples, but Ken Wyatt in particular has a great deal of experience with taking samples for analysis. None of them saw any indication the water contained oil. If the water was contaminated with oil, it would have a sheen and would probably feel and/or smell like petroleum products. Mosquitoes and other aquatic or semi-aquatic insects would not be able to survive if there was oil in the water.

I believe the dark color in the water results from humic acid formation as the organic matter (cow manure) decomposes. Soils with high organic matter content typically have darker colors which results from this phenomenon.

While I was at the site, Mr. Evans dug up the diesel fuel-contaminated soil, and I asked him to also remove the soil from under the trackhoe on the south side of the road.

The notice of intention for this mining operation does not include anything on the south side of the road. I did not see any particular problem with parking in this area except that it is not permitted. The operator needs to either stop parking in this area or ensure that he has right of entry and

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include the area in the notice of intention. Mr. Peatross indicated the trackhoe should be removed sometime during the week of July 22, 2002.

My understanding from the various conversations is that the County required the operator to have a portable toilet on site. This needs to be done.

jb
cc: Shannon Peatross, Rock-It
Chris Lang, The Edge Retreat
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ATTACHMENT

**Photographs
S/013/008**

Rock-It Stone Works, Strawberry River Quarry



Photo 1. Dark soil and water.



Photo 2. Trackhoe and vehicles parked on the south side of the road.

Paul Baker - Fwd: strawberry oil slick

From: TheEdgeRetreat <theedge@ubtanet.com>
To: Paul Baker <PAULBAKER@utah.gov>
Date: 07/18/2002 7:21 PM
Subject: Fwd: strawberry oil slick

5/013/008

Date: Thu, 18 Jul 2002 19:18:31 -0600
To: jkeetley-utah.gov
From: TheEdgeRetreat <theedge@ubtanet.com>
Subject: strawberry oil slick
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:



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Paul Baker - (rock it -stoneworks)

From: TheEdgeRetreat <theedge@ubtanet.com>
To: Paul Baker <PAULBAKER@utah.gov>
Date: 07/18/2002 9:27 PM
Subject: (rock it -stoneworks)





